

Washington, DC -- U.S. Representative Michael A. Arcuri (D-Utica) praised President Bush today for heeding his call and releasing over \$12 million in Low-Income Home Heating Assistance Program (LIHEAP) funds to help families in New York facing record breaking home heating bills. This step brings the total Fiscal Year 2008 LIHEAP allotment for New York to nearly \$360 million.

"Today's move is an invaluable step to help hard-working families struggling to make ends meet who have been hit hard by skyrocketing energy costs," **Arcuri said**. "Living on already stretched budgets, they simply can't afford food, gas, and rapidly increasing home heating bills. I am glad that the President has heeded calls to bring this critical assistance to local families, but there is still more to be done. I will continue to fight so that local families never have to choose between heating their homes and putting food on the table. "

Today, the President directed the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services to release remaining LIHEAP contingency funds for fiscal year 2008, together with the remaining no-year contingency funds. A total of \$120.7 million will be distributed to states and territories for LIHEAP as a result of this action.

The Energy Information Administration (EIA) has predicted that the cost of home heating oil will increase more than 41% from the end of 2007 to the end of 2008.

In response to rising home heating costs and the energy crisis, Arcuri and other members of the bipartisan Northeast-Midwest Congressional Coalition, including co-chairs Representatives Martin Meehan (D-MA) and Steven LaTourette (R-OH), sent a letter to the President in July asking him to release the \$120 million in LIHEAP funds.

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